



PRESS RELEASE

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Joe Rath & Dan Warner are 2022 Recipients of the Webster Arts Commission Lifetime Achievement in the Arts Award

(Webster Groves) – The 2022 recipients of the Webster Groves Arts Commission’s Lifetime Achievement in the Arts award are Joe Rath and Dan Warner. As co-creators of the Old Webster Jazz & Blues Festival, they have attracted tens of thousands of visitors to Webster Groves and helped the City maintain its reputation as the City of the Arts.

The awards ceremony and reception will take place on Friday, October 28 at the Webster Groves Rec Complex on 33 E. Glendale Rd. from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

“The Old Webster Jazz & Blues Festival is a renowned music festival in Webster Groves and it would not be what it is today without the work of Joe and Dan,” said Laura Arnold, Mayor of Webster Groves. “Both of these men have put countless hours into the City through not only this event but through their careers and other volunteer opportunities. It is a privilege to be able to honor them with this award.”

Joe Rath grew up in Oakland and graduated from St. John Vianney High School. He lived in Webster for about 20 years before moving to Crestwood where he has lived for the past 26 years with his wife, Mary, and son Matt.

He operated Acme Printers-Lithographers in Webster Groves, a family business since 1971, with his parents and several brothers and sisters. Rath recently retired and closed Acme after 49 years in Webster.

He has also been a member of The Webster Groves Jaycees, Old Webster Trade Association, and Old Webster Special Business District among other organizations. He was chairman of the Special Business District when the Streets and streetscape were done and when the Novus Redevelopment and the parking garage were built. He co-founded the Old Webster Jazz and Blues Festival with Dan Warner. The festival just celebrated its 20th anniversary.

“I love bringing people to Webster to enjoy local jazz and blues musicians and to explore all the wonderful shops and restaurants Webster has to offer,” said Rath.

City of **WEBSTER GROVES**

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Dan Warner moved to Webster Groves in 1983. He purchased Webster Records in 1986 and grew it into one of the best record shops in the area. He was a frequent guest on KMOX and continually worked to promote Webster Groves.

“I felt that I had a larger responsibility to Webster because our shop had the name of the City as part of our name so we represented the community in a bigger way,” Warner said.

The idea of the Jazz Festival came from one of his employees during a casual conversation at the shop one day in 2000.

“We thought it would be fun to host a one-day, 5-hour festival in the style of the Dixieland Festivals that we had attended.”

The event was a huge hit and provided a great way to introduce folks to Old Webster. Warner has been involved with the festival every year since.

In 2004 Warner became one of the investors who bought Switzer’s Candy Company, now based in Webster Groves. He would like to thank his wife of 25 years, Tricia, and two college-age girls, Caroline and Emily, for allowing him to be so active in the community they love.

The Webster Groves Lifetime Achievement in the Arts Award was established by the Webster Groves Arts Commission in 2007 and recognizes outstanding citizens of Webster Groves for their contribution and excellence in the arts. The Arts Commission is comprised of citizen members appointed by the City Council.

